Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-45. (Cancelled)

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising controlling at least timing of said transporting.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 46, further comprising performing said controlling by means of a freely programmable process controller unit.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of controlling the size of said station batches.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 48, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of controlling the size of said transport batch.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of controlling geometric arrangement of a station batch of at least one of said at least two stations.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 52, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of controlling geometric arrangement of said transport batch.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the steps of transporting workpieces to and from stations of said treatment facility grouped as transport batches and selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batches not to exceed the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport destination station.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, further comprising the step of selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batches to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of the station batch of a transport destination station.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, further comprising the step of selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batches to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of the station batch of a transport departure station.

59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces in at least one station of said treatment facility within a mobile magazine.

60. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces in at least one of said at least two stations within a mobile magazine.

61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of transporting said workpieces to and from at least one of said at least two stations within a mobile magazine.

62. (Currently Amended)) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of mutually and controllably isolating at least a part of stations provided at said treatment facility, with respect to atmosphere prevailing therein.

63. (Cancelled)

64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of controlling timing of at least one of loading said workpieces and of loading and unloading said at least two stations by means of a freely programmable process controller unit.

65. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of loading said workpieces to at least one of said at least two vacuum stations grouped as a station batch.

66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, further comprising the step of controlling the number of workpieces of said station batch.

67. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 66, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

68. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further; comprising the step of controlling the number of workpieces of said transport batch.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 68, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

70. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of loading said workpieces into at least one of said at least two vacuum stations grouped as a station batch and controlling the geometric arrangement of said station batch.

71. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 70, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

72. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of controlling the geometric arrangement of said transport batch.

73. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process control unit.

74. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of providing said treatment facility with at least two vacuum stations for said workpieces grouped as station batches and selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batch not to exceed the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport destination station.

75. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 74, further comprising the step of selecting said number of workpieces of said transport batch to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport destination station.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 74, further comprising the step of selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batch to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport departure station.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces in a station of said facility within a mobile magazine.

78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces in at least one of said at least two vacuum stations within a mobile magazine.

79. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of transporting said workpieces within said treatment facility within a mobile magazine.

80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising providing said transport batch within a mobile magazine.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of controllably isolating at least a part of stations provided at said facility.

82. (Cancelled)

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of controlling at least timing of said vacuum treating by means of a freely programmable process controller unit.

84. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 102, ~~further comprising~~ with the step of ~~performing said~~ controlling [[by]] comprising controlling the number of workpieces of said station batches.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 84, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

86. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 102, ~~thereby performing said~~ with the step of controlling [[by]] comprising controlling geometric arrangement of said station batches.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 86, thereby performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of transporting said workpieces to and from at least one of said at least two stations grouped as a transport batch.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 88, further comprising the step of controlling said transport batch.

90. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 89, ~~further comprising~~ with the step of ~~performing said~~ controlling [[by]] comprising controlling the number of workpieces of said transport batch.

91. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 89, ~~thereby performing said~~ with the step of controlling [[by]] comprising controlling geometric arrangement of said transport batch.

92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 89, further comprising the step of performing said controlling by way of a freely programmable process controller unit.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of transporting workpieces to and from stations of said treatment facility grouped as transport batches and selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batches not to exceed the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport destination station.

94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 93, further comprising the step of selecting said number of workpieces of said transport batches to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of a station batch of a transport destination station.

95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of transporting said workpieces to and from stations of said facility grouped as transport batches and selecting the number of workpieces of said transport batches to be an integer fraction of the number of workpieces of the station batch of a transport departure station.

96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces in a station of said facility within a mobile magazine.

97. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of providing said workpieces within at least one of said at least two stations within a mobile magazine.

98. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of transporting said workpieces to and from stations of said facility grouped as transport batches within a mobile magazine.

99. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of mutually and controllably isolating at least a part of stations provided at said facility.

100. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing surface treated workpieces, comprising loading said workpieces via loadlock arrangement into a vacuum treatment facility comprising at least two workpiece processing stations, processing with each of said at least two workpiece ~~grouped as~~ processing stations a respective station ~~batches and~~ batch of workpieces, thereby selecting said respective station batches ~~being~~ at said at least two workpiece processing stations to be different with respect to a number of workpieces, and

transporting said workpieces to and from said at least two workpiece processing stations grouped as a transport batch and vacuum surface treating said workpieces in said at least [[twos]] two stations.

101. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing surface treated workpieces, comprising [[of]]

loading said workpieces into a treatment facility having at least two vacuum stations;

loading and unloading said at least two vacuum stations with workpieces grouped as a transport batch;

controllably varying the number of workpieces of said transport batch for loading or unloading said at least two vacuum stations, and

surface treating said workpieces in said treatment facility.

102. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing surface treated workpieces, comprising vacuum treatment processing said workpieces grouped as respective station batches within at least two workpiece processing stations of a treatment facility, and controllably varying the number of workpieces of each of said station batches so as to be different with respect to a number of workpieces.